

**Delta Stewardship Council
March 10, 2011 Workshop
Panel A: Protecting, Restoring, and Enhancing the Delta Ecosystem
Response to Comments Posed to Panel A
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1. From your perspective, what are the top three priorities the Delta Plan should include in order to:

Manage the Delta's water and environmental resources and the water resources of the state over the long-term? [Water Code Section 85020(a)]

- **Change the point of diversion for water exports from the Delta to the Sacramento River**
- **Improve and increase tributary inflow to and provide more natural hydrology within the Delta**
- **Increase the amount of intertidal and floodplain habitat within the Delta as identified in Bay Delta Conservation Plan and Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan (ERP, formally CALFED ERP)**

How will your priorities protect and enhance the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place?

- These priorities are focused on protecting and enhancing the natural resource (ecosystem) values of the Delta, they also will enhance recreational opportunity, and be compatible with protecting the cultural and agricultural values of the Delta if planned appropriately and contribute to achieving the co-equal goals.

Which of your priorities should be accomplished through regulation?

- Land use policies that do not preclude future intertidal and floodplain habitat restoration.
- Policies that protect agricultural viability and maintain local tax base and services.
- Increased tributary inflow.
- Streamline permitting process for habitat restoration, flood protection and other actions necessary to provide for a sustainable Delta.

Which of your priorities should be accomplished through recommendation to the Legislature?

- Support for funding for ecosystem restoration in the context of BDCP, ERP, flood protection, and the Delta Conservancy.
- Support completion of BDCP.
- Provide dedicated Regulatory Agency staffing to work exclusively on habitat restoration implementation and facilitate permitting.

In general terms, what will your priorities cost?

- \$20 billion over 50 years plus flood protection costs.

2. From your perspective, what are the top three priorities the Delta Plan should include in order to:

Protect, maintain, and, where possible, enhance and restore the overall quality of the Delta environment, including, but not limited to, agriculture, wildlife habitat, and recreational activities? [Public Resources Code Section 29702(b)]

- **Land use policies that do not preclude future habitat restoration**
- **Flood protection improvements that accommodate protection and enhancement of aquatic and terrestrial habitat in the Delta and accommodate future climate and sea level changes**
- **Encourage wildlife friendly agricultural practices**

Restore the Delta ecosystem, including its fisheries and wildlife, as the heart of a healthy estuary and wetland ecosystem? [Water Code Section 85020(c)]

- **See priorities for 1 above**

How will your priorities protect and enhance the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place?

- These priorities are focused on protecting and enhancing the natural resource (ecosystem) values of the Delta, they also will allow for enhanced recreational opportunity, and be compatible with protecting the cultural and agricultural values of the Delta if planned and designed appropriately.

Which of your priorities should be accomplished through regulation?

- Land use policies that do not preclude future habitat restoration.
- Land use policies which encourage subsidence reversal.
- Policies that encourage flood protection actions which are compatible with ecosystem restoration.
- Provide water appropriation specifically for fish and wildlife protection.
- Federal Regulation as it applies to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) authorization of Sacramento River Bank Protection.
- Federal authorization for ACOE to engage in Ecosystem Restoration activities of the San Joaquin – Sacramento River Delta and its tributaries similar to the scope of COE Restoration on the Mississippi River System, Chesapeake Bay and the Everglades.

Which of your priorities should be accomplished through recommendation to the Legislature?

- No recommendations.

In general terms, what will your priorities cost?

- \$20 billion over 50 years plus costs of flood protection.

3. From your perspective, what are the top three priorities the Delta Plan should include in order to:

Develop new or improved aquatic and terrestrial habitat and protect existing habitats to advance the goal of restoring and enhancing the Delta ecosystem? [Water Code Section 85022(d)(5)]

- **Include the habitat protection and restoration goals of the Ecosystem Restoration Program and Bay Delta Conservation Plan.**
- **Address issues related to Delta inflow and outflow identified in the State Water Board and Department of Fish and Game Flow Criteria for the Delta*.**
- **Address other stressor issues, particularly water quality factors affecting the Delta foodweb.** Addressed through Regional WQCB and SWRCB Clean Water Act permitting.

See responses above related to regulations, legislative recommendations, costs, unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta.

Actions addressing the following measures are addressed in the Ecosystem Restoration Plan and the Stage 2 Conservation Strategy, November 18, 2010 BDCP draft plan, and the State Water Board and Fish and Game Flow Criteria for the Delta.*

Include measures that promote all of the following characteristics of a healthy Delta ecosystem Water Code Section 85302(c):

- Viable populations of native resident and migratory species
- Functional corridors for migratory species
- Diverse and biologically appropriate habitats and ecosystem processes
- Reduced threats and stresses on the Delta ecosystem
- Conditions conducive to meeting or exceeding the goals in existing species recovery plans and state and federal goals with respect to doubling salmon populations?

Include the following sub-goals and strategies [Water Code Section 85302(e)]:

- Restore large areas of interconnected habitats within the Delta and its watersheds by 2100
- Establish migratory corridors for fish, birds, and other animals along selected Delta river channels
- Promote self-sustaining, diverse populations of native and valued species by reducing the risk of take and harm from invasive species
- Restore Delta flows and channels to support a healthy estuary and other ecosystems
- Improve water quality to meet drinking water, agricultural, and ecosystem long-term goals
- Restore habitat necessary to avoid a net loss of migratory bird habitat and, where feasible, increase migratory bird habitat to promote viable populations of migratory birds?

* These criteria reflect recommendations regarding biological needs and do not balance those needs with other beneficial uses.